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INDETERMINATE LINES

A thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art at
Virginia Commonwealth University.

By

Yoon, Hyun Kyung

Director: Lydia Thompson
Assistant Professor of Ceramics
Department of Crafts and Material Studies

Virginia Commonwealth University

Richmond, Virginia

May 2007

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Sonya Clark always encourages me with her brilliance, cheerful heart, and energetic soul.

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Abstract

INDETERMINATE LINES

By Yoon, Hyun Kyung, Master of Fine Arts

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2007

Major Director: Lydia Thompson
Assistant Professor

My thesis work is about flow. Indeterminate lines symbolize the developing plant form and explore the perception of space by experimenting with the subject's proportion and shape. Movement is also a vital factor of space, a notion found in the early forms of cursive script (grass script) of Far Eastern calligraphy. My individual plant pieces work as dots and lines of cursive script. An installation's ceramic pieces illustrate similar flow and movement when viewed as a whole.

Artist's Statement

My ceramic art works share a common interest in Far Eastern Calligraphy, especially in the cursive style wherein kinetic tension of growth, as well as contrast between line and mass, elucidate the art of brush stroke.

My interest in nature has helped me to discover a new way of seeing and different approach to developing thematic ideas for making of ceramics. Some of my motives are derived from nature. The natural world is a constant source of wonder, inspiration and delight to me. I try to convey these feelings in my work. Some of my work is inspired by direct observation, while other work is motivated by impressions and images stored in memory.

My approach to forming sculpture involves a personal set of methods I have developed for working with clay. I use the wheel to make a variety of forms, because the wheel allows flexibility in shape and size. As I work, I create parts without a preconceived plan and then assemble forms from those pieces. For me, making ceramic sculpture is an additive process in which I use multiple parts to create unique form. Although the individual sections I use are recognizable pottery shapes, the compositions I develop are abstract.

As a ceramist, I am naturally interested in form, but a sense of spatial awareness is always useful. I manipulate the shape of negative spaces to create new form possibilities. The changing relationship between an object and the space it occupies questions my understanding of what I see. Curved line provides rhythmic repetition and movement. I am

interested in getting the eye to move over and around the piece.

Influences

Along with my ceramic works in graduate school, I started to research contemporary modern artists. I am influenced by artists who deal with the concepts that artistic value is entirely determined by its form. When I researched Ruth Duckworth's sculptures, I was overwhelmed in her essence of organic form by using the simplest geometric shapes. She reduced her forms to pure abstraction that serve as metaphors of the morphemic fragments of objects the artist perceives in the world. Ruth Duckworth came from a strong formalist background influenced by the artists, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and Constantin Brancusi, as well as the American artist Isamu Noguchi. Duckworth's modernist forms were inspired by nature. She discovered a natural rhythm in making organic sculpture in clay. Her work from this time period has been described as truly original and groundbreaking in both form and surface. I am interested in her playful compositional treatment of sculpture through pure white three dimensional abstract shapes. The combination of contrasting elements creates an energetic dialogue (Fig.1, 2).

Duckworth mentioned: Play is the essence of creativity. Creative play and gut reaction, instinct. When I work on a piece, I play. I have a whole huge section of the studio where I have an inventory of sculptural forms, simple, abstract, non-specific shapes that I find beautiful and enjoy making. Then I start building these shapes together. And when I find myself smiling, I say "hello!" I think I have got something. The process is intuitive, not intellectual. You have to learn to be spontaneous and trust yourself. (Lauria and Birks, 2005)

I am also interested in the ceramic work of Wouter Dam. His interior and exterior forms are of equal interest to me. His monochromatic sculptures that contour floating free

in space seem to be inflated by the air that passes through them. His work demonstrates a remarkable ability to combine sleek and undulating ceramic forms with soft and sensual color. The result is a marvelous and minimal blend of these things, simple and elegant architecture (Fig.3, 4).

I also enjoy the Frank Stella sculptures and paintings of the mid 1980's. During this time, Stella began creating additional by space within the three dimensional realm. He also attempted free standing and wall mounted sculpture, some on a monumental scale that combine unpainted stainless steel tubing and carbon fiber. The looping, interwoven tubing created three-dimensional forms that suggest movement and volume as well as lightness and delicacy. These works have the quality of spontaneous, linear drawings or sketches suspended in space. Stella stated that the aim of art is to create space. I also want to adopt a new way of seeing, a different approach to developing ceramics (Fig.5).

Jorge Oteiza is another sculptor who developed a new concept of space. His exploration of three dimensional space inspired me. He represents an early expression of the minimalist aesthetic in sculpture. Oteiza's work was the result of a search for order, balance, and objectivity. He admired the purity of formalism and attempted to apply it to sculpture. Based on the notion of sculpture as a solid body, Oteiza took exploration of three-dimensional space to its limit, in search of negative space. He called attention to the spatial transformations undergone in the process of making sculpture and the invisible presence within negative space (Fig.6, 7).

In contemporary ceramics, the concept of accumulation, the pile, the stack, and the mound has been explored by Tyler Lotz and Bean Finneran's works. Lotz tries to develop

an understanding of element of design in structure, of the organizational forces that control them, and an ability to apply this knowledge to his self expression. Nature's architecture provides the basis for the structure and energy of his ceramic sculpture. Simple curves, robust and resilient, comprise a flower's form, lending durability to the otherwise frailest of stock. As in nature each new piece is a mutation, an amendment to an idea, that can cross medians and return with new information. Lotz's patterns attract the eye and provide contrast to the monochrome simplicity of the surface, inviting the viewer to stay and explore (Fig.8, 9).

Finneran's work embodies a repetition that is meditational rather than compulsive. Her circles and cones recall ideas first put forward in the scatter pieces of post minimalists. Each curved wand of clay has been rolled by hand. The most important part of the process is the way each sculpture grows through accumulation, curve after curve linking together in a way that evokes natural growth and form. Finneran's works refer is some primary way to consumption or spectacle. The repetition of the curving form suggests force and with it, a slow, almost imperceptible movement. Her work exists in everything it reminds you of, from the sound of falling trees in a distant forest to the jostling, circling blood cells flowing unseen in your body as you read these words. She creates a site specific installation composed of ceramic curves, hand-glazed manufactured bricks, drawings and paints. Her forms reflect the process of change and ordered chaos found in the marshland surrounding her home and throughout the natural world. The intimate details of small ceramic curves and glazed bricks make these massive constructions possible, much as a nature thousands of living coral make-up a reef. Finneran favors repetition in her work as a form of

meditation, allowing the pieces to take on a neutral shape where the whole becomes greater than the sum of its part (Fig.10, 11).



Figure 1: Ruth Duckworth, A grouping of black and white porcelain, 4"-17" high, 2000



Figure 2: Ruth Duckworth, Untitled , Porcelain, 32"x9"x9",1996



Figure 3: Wouter Dam, Blue Sculpture No.40, 2005, 9.5"x13"x12"



Figure 4: Wouter Dam, Yellow Piece, 2004, 8"x11"x11"



Figure 5: Frank Stella, *Djailing*, Stainless steel with carbon fiber, 43"x28"x36", 2004

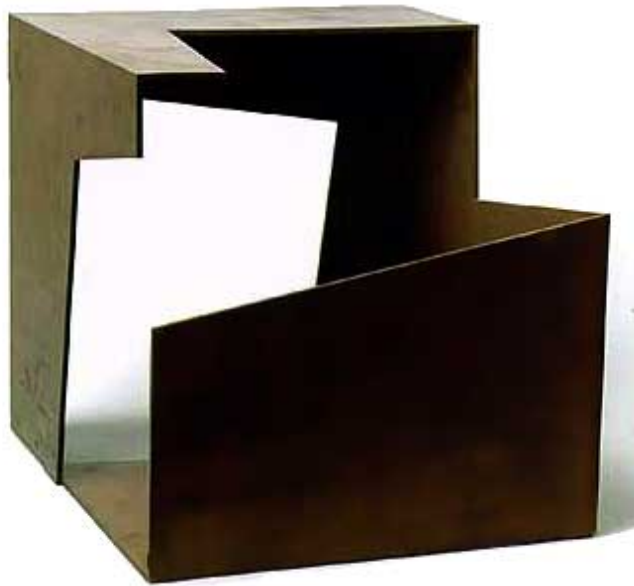


Figure 6: Jorge Oteiza, Construcción Vacía, 450x360x32k, 1957



Figure 7: Jorge Oteiza, Fase revia de la desocupación de la esfera, Iron
15"x20 3/4"x16 1/2", 1957



Figure 8: Tyler Lotz, Creep, Ceramic and acrylic, 19"x23"x12", 2006



Figure 9: Tyler Lotz, Tendril No.13, Ceramic and acrylic, 11"x22"10 1/2", 2006

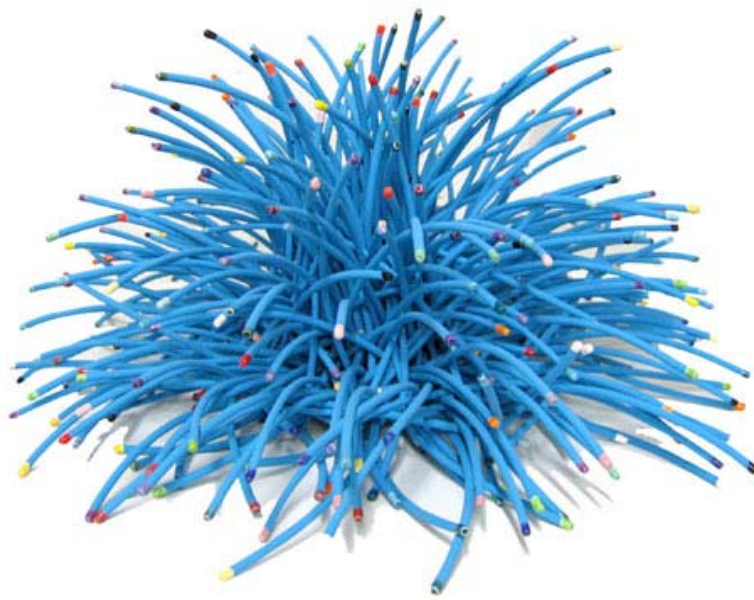


Figure 10: Bean Finneran, Sea form, Ceramic, dimensional variable, 2006



Figure 11: Bean Finneran, Orange dome 3700 curves, dimensional variable, 2006

Thesis

I like the feel of the clay. I like the excitement of mastering new skills. I like the mystery of firing. Working in my studio is like meditation for me. Clay work gives me the energy to put my thoughts, feelings, soul, and enthusiasm into my sculptures. It is like communicating with nature through an earthy medium. Through this laboring act I find my inner-self being purified and honest in everything. Therefore, every time I start my studio work, I am overwhelmed with all kinds of thought and thanksgiving.

My ceramic artwork began to take root in Korea, where, for ten years, I operated my own ceramic studio, shop, and gallery. However, when I started graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth University, I wanted to spend an increasing amount of time on non-functional and sculptural form. My ideas are influenced by the forms I see around me. I am impressed by forms that are exquisitely simple (Fig.12, 13). I use the wheel, which allows for flexibility in the shape and size of the sculpture. Yet, my sculpture consists of the classic forms of the potter, such as the bowl, sphere, dome, and ring. Although the individual parts I use are recognizable pottery shapes, the compositions I develop are abstract. For me, making ceramic sculpture is an additive process in which I use conventional shapes to create unique forms (Fig.14).

During the first year in graduate school I thought a great deal about the act of joining forms together. I studied the way objects in nature are joined and found the junction between forms or parts of a form interesting (Fig.15). I began by experimenting with white

and black slip and carving on my ceramic surface to create elegant abstract textures. From this I discovered that texture is an intrinsic property, and by using dots and lines I could give sensitivity and powerful beauty to my ceramic pieces (Fig.16, 17, 18).

I have since developed intricate relief imagery on the surface of my pieces. Sometimes I strive for surfaces enriched with complex painted imagery (Fig.19). I spend a great deal of time and energy developing the surface for a natural motif. My experience teaches me that lines are the best medium with which to create rhythmic repetition and movement. However, I have only sporadically explored the conceptual relationships between surface and overall form in the making of free standing ceramic objects.

The connection between surface imagery and overall form is a conceptual association that is almost metonymic. My interests and ideas about nature and plant life are transformed into cultivated artworks. These have been influenced by the hidden beauty in the natural image of texture, pattern, and color. There are possibilities for natural imagery in everyday life and every mode of artistic expression (Fig.20, 21).

My ceramic sculptures are shaped by the interplay of masses and lines found in nature, which provide repetition, rhythm, symmetry, asymmetry, focal emphasis, and underlying shape. Projection and recession, light and shadow, substance and impression are the subjects of my work. The shapes are the players, intersecting, extending, colliding, or passing through, over, under, and beyond one another to command space (Fig 22, 23, 24).

I try to convey these observations in my work. Some works result from direct observation, others from impressions and images stored in my memory from years before. I like to find new ways of looking at natural and man-made worlds: When on walks, I always

look at the exterior of tree, time and again amazed to see the varieties of bark; looking into a lake, I study the ripples of the water distorting the reflection of the trees, a phenomenon that creates wonderful patterns, the trees 'with rhythm' contrasting starkly with the trees growing on the bank; the silhouette of an object against the sky makes a powerful impact and challenges me to look more closely. Shadows, reflections, and silhouettes all offer new ways of seeing the world. The natural world remains the strongest source of inspiration for my work and it is there where I find most of my ideas for form, pattern, and surface. I want to develop the pattern instinctively, inspired by what I see around me (Fig.25, 26, 27, 28).

By repeating my observation exercise, I am able to achieve a greater understanding of how to manipulate form and space. As a ceramist, I am naturally interested in form, but a sense of spatial awareness is always useful. Relating objects to each other and the space they occupy informs my own work by questioning my understanding of what I see.

I use intuition as a primary component of my work process. I find new ways to approach tubular forms. I throw hollow rings and cut them into two to three pieces and reorganize them as completely new structures. My forms get more complicated as a result of working with tubular forms and multiple parts. They are light, open, and airy moving shapes. I use many parts in combination to symbolize the flow and growth of plants. Sometimes the resulting forms twist and turn to make slow curves, fast curves, or directional curves (Fig 29, 30, 31).

I can create curvilinear structures enclosing tremendous volumes of empty space. I formulate the shape of negative space in three dimensional sculpture. Relating forms to each other and the space they occupy informs my own work to create flow and movement. I

use curvilinear to create the tension of movement. The purpose of this form making is that I learn how to move tubular lines drastically in and out of space. I make forms move in and out as much as possible. I use a variety of curves and some neutral curves to make my sculpture more interesting. I use linear forms to provide a deeper understanding of the balance of directional forces and of tensional position in space (Fig.32, 33, 34, 35, 36).

I link the dynamic relationship between the wall installations and the surrounding space. I imagine my wall installation as a sketch book, and I start to draw pictures on it with my forms. The rhythmic movement of a tree growing in space finds a common interest in the free style of calligraphy, especially in cursive script.

Cursive script, also known as Grass script, is a style of Chinese calligraphy. (The Chinese character for “grass” means loose and sketchy.) Cursive script is faster to write than other styles, but it is also harder to read. Faster ways to write characters developed through four mechanisms: omitting part of a graph, merging strokes together, replacing portions with abbreviated forms (such as one stroke to replace four dots), or modifying stroke style (Wikipedia) (Fig.37, 38).

My ceramic sculpture shows indeterminate lines, which symbolize the developing plant form and explore the perception of space by experimenting with the subject's proportion and shape. Movement is also a vital factor of space, a notion found in the early forms of cursive script of Far Eastern calligraphy. My individual plant pieces work as dots and lines of cursive script. The ceramic sculptures illustrate a similar flow and movement as Grass script when viewed as a whole (Fig.39, 40, 41, 42, 43).

In my sculpture, I use an imaginative range of rhythm, movement, volume, line,

and tensions. Through my graduate work at Virginia Commonwealth University, I discovered a new way of seeing and a different approach to developing a thematic idea for making my ceramic sculpture. I developed an understanding of structures that I can control and an ability to apply my knowledge to a variety of situations. The world around me is a constant source of wonder, inspiration, and delight.



Figure 12: landscape 1



Figure 13: landscape 2



Figure 14: display "Untitled"



Figure 15: "Geometric Series I" 30"x12"x13"



Figure 16: "Untitled I" 17"x15"x13"



Figure 17: "Untitled II" 13"x10"x8"



Figure 18: "Untitled III" 14"x14"x5"



Figure 19: "Untitled IV" 16"x15"x12"



Figure 20: detail “Untitled”



Figure 21: detail “Untitled II” 13”x10”x8”



Figure 22: "Flow 1", wall installation, 6'x8'x1', 2006



Figure 23: detail “Flow 1”, wall installation, 2006



Figure 24: detail “Flow 1”, wall installation, 2006



Figure 25: "Cursive 3" 14"x23"x9"



Figure 26: "Cursive 6" 11"x17"x10"



Figure 27: "Cursive 4" 22"x15"x9"



Figure 28: "Cursive 7" 24"x13"x9"



Figure 29: detail "Indeterminate Lines I", wall installation, 2007



Figure 30: detail "Indeterminate Lines I", wall installation, 2007



Figure 31: detail “Indeterminate Lines II”, wall installation, 2007



Figure 32: "Indeterminate Line 1"

20"x18"x10"

Figure 33: "Indeterminate Line 2"

19"x15"x11"





Figure 34: "Indeterminate Line 3"

24"x15"x10"



Figure 35: "Indeterminate Line 4"

23"x18"x12"



Figure 36: "Indeterminate Line 5" 26"x22"x10"

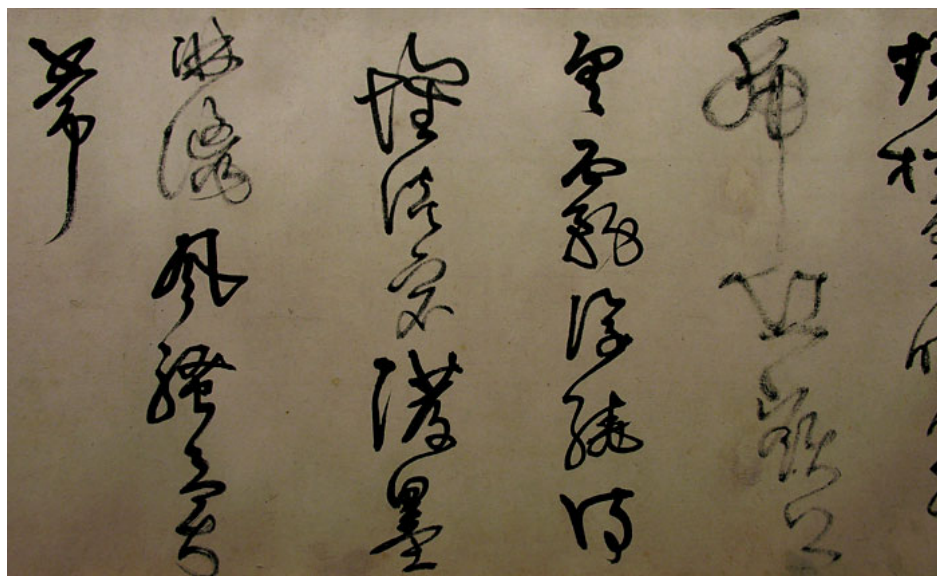


Figure 37: Wang Duo, calligraphy in cursive script, Qing Dynasty

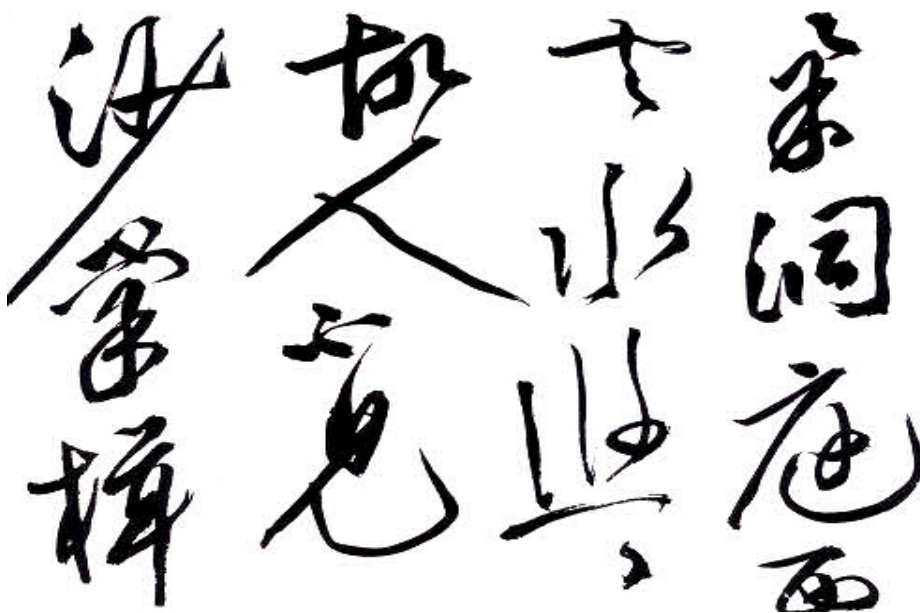


Figure 38: Wen Zhengming, calligraphy in cursive script



Figure 39: "Indeterminate Lines I", wall installation, 8'x8'x1', 2007



Figure 40: "Indeterminate Lines II", wall installation, 14'x8'x1', 2007



Figure 41: “Indeterminate Lines I”, wall installation, 8’x8’x1’, 2007



Figure 42: “Indeterminate Lines II”, wall installation, 14’x8’x1’, 2007

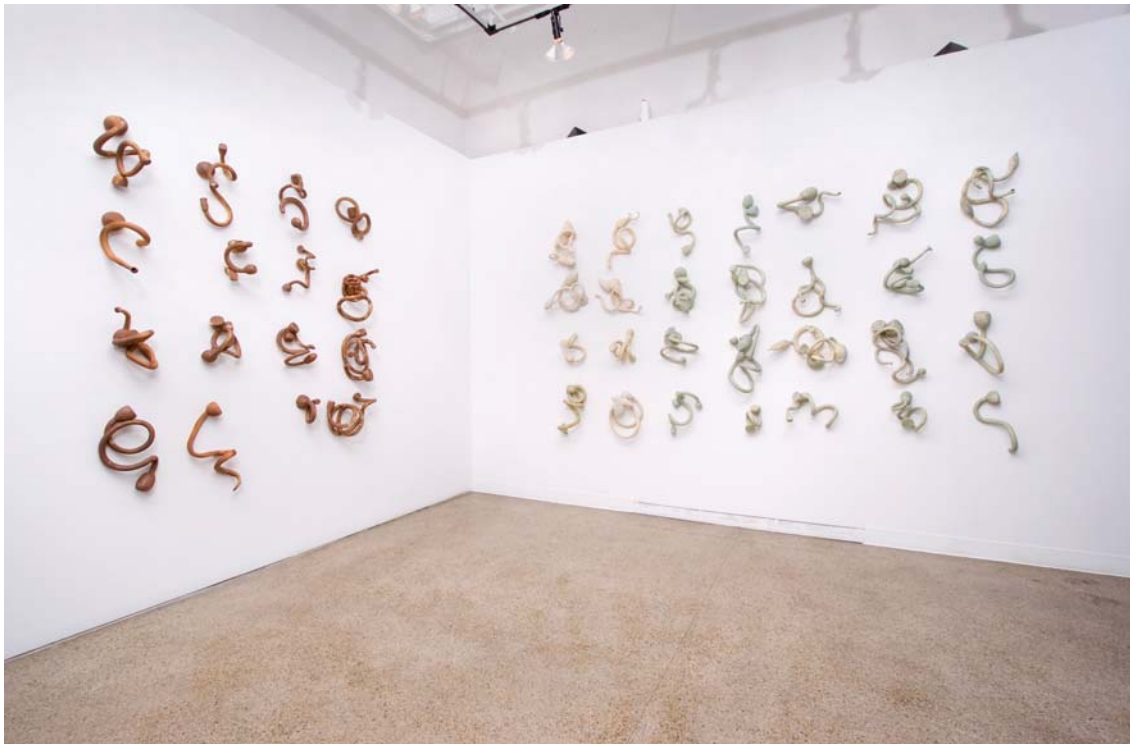


Figure 43: “Indeterminate Lines I & II”, wall installation, 2007

Technical Information

The ceramic body and glaze were selected to meet the firing condition of my work.

I choose low fire (cone 04) oxidation firing in the electric kiln.

I used two types of clay body:

Stoneware Clay Body

Hawthorne Fire Clay	40
Goldart	30
Custer Feldspar	15
OM4 Ball Clay	15

Dempsey Low Fire White

Tile 6	25
OM4 Ball Clay	25
Talc	25
Hawthorne Fire Clay	25

The composition of black colored glaze is:

Forbes Black

G-200 feldspar	30
Whiting	11
Zinc Oxide	5
Gerstly Borate	10
Frit 3124	24
EPK	10

Strontium Carbonate	7.5
---------------------	-----

Manganese Dioxide	6%
-------------------	----

Copper Oxide	5%
--------------	----

Red Iron Oxide	2%
----------------	----

Chrome Oxide	1%
--------------	----

Another type of glaze is matt Snowflake glaze. This is a beautiful pearly glaze. To get this effect it has to be applied thickly. This glaze is very runny at cone 04, therefore it should be used with caution. Its formula is:

Snowflake

Lithium Carbonate	29
-------------------	----

Nepheline Syenite	70
-------------------	----

EPK	11
-----	----

Rutile	6
--------	---

Magnesium Carbonate	5
---------------------	---

Red Iron Oxide	6.0%	(for dark brown)
----------------	------	------------------

Copper Carbonate	0.4%
------------------	------

Rutile	1.2%	(for light yellow)
--------	------	--------------------

Copper Carbonate	0.4%
------------------	------

Nickel Oxide	1.0%	(for light green)
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YOON, HYUN KYUNG

Education

- 2007 MFA in Ceramics, Department of Craft and Material Studies, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia
- 1984 B.S. in Applied Design. University of Minnesota. St. Paul, Minnesota

Supplemental Education

- 2004 Summer Course Work: Ceramic Sculpture. New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, Alfred, New York
- 2002 Summer Course Work: Alfred Summer Ceramics. New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, Alfred, New York
- 1995-6 Extension Courses: Korean Ceramic Arts. Dankuk University, Seoul, Korea

Work Experience

- 1996-present Owner, Ceramic Arts Studio & Gallery Monticello, Yangpyong, South Korea

Solo Exhibition

- 2004 Egg Figure, Mokkumto Gallery, Seoul, South Korea (By invitation).

Selected Exhibitions

- 2007 The 5th Cheongju International Craft Biennial 2007, Cheongju, South Korea
 “Creative Evolution, deeply and slowly” (By invitation)
- 2007 2007 MFA Biennial Exhibition, Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington, DE (Juried)
- 2007 MFA Exhibition, Anderson Gallery, Richmond, VA
- 2006 World Women: on the Horizon, Baltimore Clayworks, Baltimore, MD (Juried)
 International Juried Exhibition by Heeseung Lee, Janet Mansfield, and Lydia Thompson
- 2006 The Goods/ MFA Candidates, Gallery 5, Richmond, VA
 W/E Trade Exchange Exhibition, East Gallery, Claremont Graduate University, CA
 Select Works/ Exhibition of VCU MFA Candidates, Capital One, Richmond, VA

- 2005 Ultracoun, Richmond Camera, Richmond, VA
 First Year Crafts/Material Studies Grad Show, FAB Gallery, Richmond, VA
- 2004 The 2nd 'Mulmoeri' Group Exhibition, Gasan Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
 The 31st Korean Crafts Council Exhibition, Seoul Arts Center, Seoul, South Korea
 Yangpyong Art Exhibition, Yangpyong Museum of Art, Yangpyong, South Korea
- 2003 The 1st 'Mulmoeri' Group Exhibition, Gasan Gallery, Seoul
 The 30th Korean Crafts Council Exhibition, Seoul Arts Center Gallery, Seoul
 Yangpyong Art Exhibition, Yangpyong Art Museum, Yangpyong
- 2002 The 30th Anniversary of Dankook Ceramics Exhibition, Kyongin Gallery, Seoul
 The 29th Korean Crafts Council Exhibition, Seoul Arts Center Gallery, Seoul
 The 12th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, Gana Art Space, Seoul
 Opening Exhibition, Gallery Monticello, Yangpyong
- 2001 The 1st Korea-Japan Ceramic Art Club Exhibition, Hyundai Art Gallery, Seoul
 The 28th Korean Crafts Council Exhibition, Seoul Arts Center Gallery, Seoul
 The 11th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, Kyongin Gallery, Seoul
 Yangpyong Art Exhibition, Yangpyong Art Museum, Yangpyong
- 2000 The 10th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, Kyongin Gallery, Seoul
- 1999 The 9th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, Chosun-Ilbo Gallery, Seoul
- 1998 The 8th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, To Art Space, Seoul
- 1997 The 7th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, Korean Crafts Promo Foundation Gallery, Seoul
- 1996 The 6th 'Danwoong' Group Exhibition, Chung Hak Gallery, Seoul

Teaching Experience

- 2006-7 Adjunct Professor, Beginning Handbuilding, Virginia Commonwealth University,
 Richmond, VA
- 2005 Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Handbuilding, Virginia Commonwealth University,
 Richmond, VA

Awards and Scholarship

- 2006 Graduate School Travel Grant, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Affiliation

Member of Cup Creek Foundation, Appomattox, VA

Member of Contemporary Craft Society

Korean Fine Arts Association